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ABSTRACT

Kenya and Ghana provide interesting case studies of the theory that women who have access to roles other than mother and whose status does not depend largely or solely on the number of children they bear will have fewer children. Kenyan and Ghanaian women have among the highest desired and actual fertility in the world. They also, relatively speaking, appear to have a degree of independence and breadth of roles which many women, Muslim women in particular, do not have. This paper documents briefly the status and roles of women in each of these countries, their fertility levels and what they imply for the theoretical model under consideration. (Author)

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THE STATUS AND ROLES OF GHANAIAN AND KENYAN WOMEN: IMPLICATIONS FOR FERTILITY BEHAVIOR

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Profile of Ghanaian Women

The contemporary boundaries of Ghana , set during the colonial period, encompass some 200 precolonial units. These traditional sociopolitical systems fall into one of four basic organizations types: The Akan, the Ewe, the Ga, and the Northern. Of these the Akan predominate and characterize not only the Akan speaking states, which together comprise about half of Ghana's population, but in modified form influence the three largest northern states and the Ewe states. The role of women, as might be anticipated, differed considerably in these groups.

Women had the highest status, greatest independence, and held the most significant positions in the Akan. Their high status derived in part from matrilineal patterns of descent and inheritance. Under the matrilineal system, men retained paramount political authority and in many ways the mother's brother assumed the roles the father exercises in a patrilineal system. Nevertheless, the fact that women determined kinship connections and that all children belonged to the mother's family elevated women's importance and value and contributed to their sense of self-respect and dignity. Moreover, women could increase their power by utilizing the inherent conflict between their kinship obligations and their marital ties to their own advantage (Fortes, 1950; Manoukian, 1950; Rattray, 1929).

The Non-Akan ethnic groups in Ghana followed the more common pattern of determining descent through the father. Among the Ga, however, the coastal people who traditionally inhabited the Accra area, women retained their independence and wielded considerable power within the society. This resulted in part from the modification of the usual patrilineal patterns of inheritance

which allowed a woman's property to pass to her sisters and all of her children (Manoukian, 1950; Field, 1940). On the other hand, among some Northern groups, like the Tallensi, men's authority over their wives was so extensive that men would say that a man owns his wife (Fortes, 1949:101). The practice of sex separation in many of the Northern and Ewe communities also excluded women from participating actively in social and political affairs (Manoukian, 1951, 1952; Fortes, 1945; Tait, 1961; Nukunya, 1969).

In the Akan system the lineage normally elected a man as its head and representative on the village council, but male lineage heads frequently had female counterparts who supervised female matters, adjudicated family quarrels, advised on matters of geneology, and supervised certain key rituals. At higher levels of state organization, the queen-mother had even greater power for it was she who nominated the new chief, advised him about his conduct, and heard matrimonial cases.

The Ga lineages also chose men to head them, but within the Ga social organization certain key positions, including ritual "town" offices and religious offices were reserved for women (Manoukian, 1950:96). In the Ewe and Northern systems women had more circumscribed roles and political offices were monopolized by men.

While their image of women's place in the society differed, none of the ethnic groups considered women's role to be limited to serving as wives and mothers. The general pattern was for married women to be economically active in their own right and not merely as auxilliaries for their husbands, for them to have their own sources of income, and for them to assume part of the burden for the support of the household. Women commonly cultivated specific crops, engaged in petty trading, and sometimes produced handicrafts; the income was usually theirs (Fortes, 1949:102-103; Manoukian, 1950:71; McCall, 1961:286

Nunkunya, 1969:149; Tait, 1961:197-198). Regardless of whether the woman's role was considered to be substantially equal to that of the male members, as among the Akan, or subordinate, as among the Ewe or Northern groups, men never interfered with or attempted to regulate directly women's conduct. Marriage was considered to entail a series of rights and duties for both partners, some of which grew out of the sexual division of labor. Otherwise they tended to have their own lives. Sex separation accorded women considerable independence, increasing the possibility for women to develop a corporate sense of identity and social networks.

In Ghanaian traditional societies, women did not depend solely on children for their status and security. A barren woman might be displaced by another wife or divorced by her husband, but otherwise the number of children a woman produced did not alter her relationship with her husband or increase the possibility for marital stability. Among some of the groups when a specified number of children had been born to a woman, a ceremony was held to commemorate this and honor her. Marriage and child bearing were, however, integral aspects of a woman's role definition. Furthermore, children provided her with labor on her farm and could assist her with her petty trading. Especially among the groups with considerable marital instability, children still supply their mother with security for her old age. Furthermore, the strong bond between mother and child, which is the predominant family tie even in the patrilineal societies, brings with it an emotional satisfaction that women usually do not derive from other relationships.

Colonial policies had a rather important influence on sex role definitions and the opportunities for women in society. Some groups had far greater access to schooling and to the new economic opportunities by virtue of their proximity to and their willingness to cooperate with the colonial power. Largely by the accident of history and geographic location, the ethnic groups in which women held the highest status were the ones which benefitted most. Some groups, particularly the Fanti and the Ga, were producing university graduates to fill responsible positions by the second part of the nineteenth century whereas the exclusion of Christian missionaries and the separate administration of the North meant that the area lagged continuously behind the remainder of the country. Thus women's circumscribed roles in the traditional sphere in the North have been compounded by their limited access to education and jobs in the modern sector.

Christian missionaries and colonial administrators brought with them Victorian conceptions concerning the place of women in society. Generally they did not appreciate the significant contribution women frequently made and their sense of independence. Even when anthropologists provided evidence of the true role of women among many of the groups, prejudices prevented any application of this knowledge.

The spread of education, primarily under the aegis of missionaries, adversely affected the position of women more than anything else. Beginning in the colonial period, as one observer has commented, "education appears to have become the basis for a kind of social and economic sexual inequality from which Ghanaian society has previously been relatively free " (Griffiths, 1974:13). The education of men, at all levels, was accorded much higher priority than the education of women. Moreover, women's education in Ghana, as in Europe during the same period, was oriented toward domestic skills rather than intellectual concerns. Girls' schooling thus did not enable them to go

on to higher levels of the educational system and it tended to be largely irrelevant to the needs of their society (Graham, 1971). (Education since independence is discussed below.)

Aside from the imbalance in the number of boys and girls educated, several other aspects of the colonial legacy should be noted here. Ghana's pattern of economic development, which differed significantly from most other African territories, enabled women to participate in the cash economy in two respects, through cash cropping and through marketing. The growth of the cocoa industry did not involve the opening of plantations nor were government agricultural extension workers, who have generally tended to exclude women, involved (Boserup, 1970). Nevertheless, despite the fact that women traditionally grew many of the food crops, men have predominated in the cocoa sector. Little systematic research has been done as to why this occurred, but it is possible to piece together some data. This indicates that cocoa farming frequently involved emigration from the village to find suitable land; women were more constrained than men from leaving the village to settle elsewhere. Moreover, the companies which the male migrants formed as a mechanism to purchase the land from the chief rarely permitted women to join in their own right. In cases where women did establish farms, on their death ownership probably reverted back to the male members of the family (Hill, 1963:11, 39, 42, 65, 116-117). At the present time in the major cocoa growing area, Brong-Ahafo Region, women own one-ninth of the farms, and actively assist their husbands on the remainder (Addo, 1971, "Some Aspects of the Employment Situation. . . "). The extent to which this reflects a long-standing division or represents the pattern in other cocoa growing areas is difficult to determine.

Women's most significant economic advancement during the colonial period came through the opening up of the retail sector. The greater law and order

provided by the colonial administration enabled many women in the rural areas to expand their trade into markets which were farther away and gradually the limitations on the items women could deal in disappeared. In the urban areas, the largely uneducated women migrants found petty trading the most suitable economic activity for them to engage in because it did not demand much capital, education, or restrictions on time. The popularity of such trading is shown by the estimates of one researcher that in 1952 in Koforidua, a southern Ghanaian town, 70% of the female population engaged in selling on a more or less full time basis (McCall, 1961:292). The establishment of central markets in the towns enabled women to rent stalls, regularize, and expand their enterprises. Over time women were able to monopolize the sectors of the wholesale and retail trade which were Ghanaianized. Thus urbanization did not result in widespread displacement of women from the economy, as happened in some other territories in Africa. Contrary to prevailing patterns elsewhere, it frequently increased the woman's independence from rather than dependence on her husband.

Despite the significant traditional roles women have held among many groups, women played very little part in the independence movement Nor have they been politically active since. Ghanaian constitutions have guaranteed equality for women and opened up all offices in the political system to them. Women have never been excluded from the top levels of the civil service or from any high position in the government. When the expansion of suffrage took place during the colonial period women attained universal adult suffrage at the same time as men. Nevertheless women have held few significant political offices.

Although Nkrumah did not accord the improvement of the status of women high priority, he undertook a number of measures, in the period from independence in 1957 until his overthrow in 1966,

designed to modernize or mobilize Ghana which very much benefitted women. Perhaps the most important of these was the expansion of the educational system and the elimination of school fees. Almost all public primary and middle schools are coeducational now. Girls' attendance has increased, often at a slightly higher rate than boys', but it has failed to end the disparity between boys and girls. As Table 1 below indicates, a smaller proportion of the girls in the eligible age group begin school. At each succeeding level of the educational system girls constitute an ever lower percentage of the total number of students. Despite the elimination of school fees for primary and middle schools, parents must pay a considerable amount of money for the required school uniforms and books, and secondary school fees. Since girls are supposed to marry and have children, many parents evidently assume that they will make less use of their education and will be restricted in their career advancement. Finally, girls are more often needed for work at home. An increasingly large proportion of women are receiving some education, but, at the upper reaches, the percentage of women remains fairly constant. Thus in the 10 years between 1960 and 1970 the percentage of women, six years and over who had never been to school decreased from 83% to 66%. In the compulsory school age group of 6-14, female attendance went from 33.3% to 58.4%; male attendance was 66.5%, up from 53.3% (1970 Census, Volume II:xxiv). At the time of the 1960 census women comprised 17% of those in the population above the age of six who had attended the sixth form (comparable to the first year of American university training and a requirement to enter a Ghanaian university), and 18% of those who had attended a university (1960 Population Census, Volume III, 1964:38). 1968-69 educational statistics are given in Table 1 which indicates that women were not even

TABLE 1

Percent of Ghanaian Students Who are Girls

At Each Level of Education 1968 - 1969

Level of Education	Percent
Primary enrollment	44.0
Form 1	46.0
Form 6	42.0
Middle School enrollment	36.7
Form 1	40.5
Form 4	30.7
Secondary School enrollment	25.8
Forms 1 - 5	26.4
Form 6	16.0
University Enrollment	8.5
University of Ghana (premier institution)	14.4
University of Science and Technology	5.3
University of Cape Coast (teacher training)	10.6

Source: Educational Statistics, 1968 - 1969:13, 36, 50-51, 68-70.

holding their own at the highest levels. Moreover, educational expansion has apparently peaked and it does not seem likely that more places will be provided for women at the sixth form level, the present bottleneck impeding women's advancement.

Disparities in education as well as increasing competition for scarce jobs have restricted women's access to employment. In 1970, 61.1% of all Ghanaian women were engaged in some economic activity (53.7% in 1960). Between 1960 and 1970 female employment increased while male employment dropped, largely due to the fact that more males over 15 remained in school (1970 Population Census, Volume II:xxiv). But the sectors in which women participate the most heavily--trading, farming, farm management, domestic service--are those which do not require much education and in which they have always been engaged (See Table 2). The question arises then whether women will be able to retain a vital economic role. It seems unlikely that major technological innovations will displace women from farming, but the high rate of population growth may create a land scarcity which would make it harder for women to maintain their own farms. Since women have such a strong hold over the small-scale wholesale-retail trade it seems doubtful that the growth of large-scale economic enterprises will dislodge them in the near future, especially since the attempts of the Ghana National Trading Corporation to take over food marketing have not been very successful. However, it seems unlikely that the market women will be able to go beyond trading into middle or large scale ventures because they tend to be uneducated and because they usually reinvest their profits into their business only up to some arbitrary level (Sai, 1971). Nor have women been trained for managerial posts in major enterprises.

TABLE 2

Women's Occupational Breakdowns in Ghana in 1960

Sector	Percent of Total Sector
Professional, technical and related workers	18
Administrative, executive, and managerial	3
Clerical Workers	7
Sales Workers	80
Farmers, fishermen, related	37
Miners, quarrymen, and related	5
Craftsmen, production process workers	3
Service, sport, recreation (including domestic workers)	39

Source: 1960 Population Census of Ghana, Vol. IV, 1964:36

Over the long term women's economic contribution will depend on their access to other sources of employment. Between 1960 and 1968 women's position in technical and professional groups improved somewhat. Table 3 gives a breakdown by profession from a 1968 manpower survey. At the middle level of subprofessional and technical workers women were well represented in nursing, midwifery, and teaching. Women's participation in government has been relatively high for Tropical Africa but still not very extensive. Women have held senior civil service posts (judgeships, principal secretaries in important ministries, ambassadors), and have sat in Parliament (10 were elected in 1960; 2 of 9 who sought election in 1969; Danquoah, n.d.).

A 1971 assessment of the manpower situation in Ghana revealed that a considerable need still exists for professional, technical, administrative, and managerial skills, particularly at the middle levels (Assessment of Manpower Situation - 1971, 1971). The Ghanaian Government has not expressed any interest in reserving a certain proportion of these posts for women. Nor does it seem likely that the educational system, with the limitations described above will produce a significantly greater number of educated women qualified for these opening.

The greatest unknown with respect to employment prospects for women is what will happen to the women with a primary and middle school education. They exhibit at least the same disinclination as their male counterparts to remain in farming in rural hinterlands and also prefer not to take up trading in the urban areas since they consider petty trading unsuitable for educated women.

Population estimates project that Ghana's rate of urbanization, approximately 27% now, will continue to accelerate. A high proportion of the

TABLE 3

Ghanaian Women as a Percent of Persons

In Specific Job Categories

Job	Percent
Middle level subprofessional and technical workers	25
High level and skilled professionals	9
Ghanaian medical officers	16
Ghanaian dentists	34
Law officers	38
Secondary School teachers	17
High level administrators and managers	3
Middle level administrators and managers	14

Sources: High Level and Skilled Manpower Survey in Ghana, 1968, 1971: 35, 37, 38

Educational Statistics, 1968-1969, 1971:53

female educated population already resides in urban areas (41% in 1960 as against 23% of the overall female population), where they have been attracted by hope of further education and employment (Addo, "Some Demographic Aspects. . .", 1971:73). Female emigrants to towns have sought jobs as clerks,typists,seamstresses, domestic servants,bakers,and industrial workers. None of these avenues of employment, however, is expanding rapidly enough to absorb the migrants and evidence exists that employers give precedence to males in hiring policies. One major factor accounting for this is Ghana's very liberal maternity benefits and other aspects of the employment code as they relate to women (Peil, 1972:109), which makes it expensive to employ women. Women also prefer self-employment, whenever possible, because it is easier to combine with marriage and child-rearing. Factories do not maintain day nursuries and there are few public nursuries. Women in factory work tend to be young, literate, and unmarried, and to view their factory employment as temporary (Peil, 1962:36, 46).

The strongest women's voluntary associations have been those organized by the predominantly illiterate market women. Women's auxilliaries attached to the political parties frequently have been little more than paper organizations. The National Council of Ghanaian Women, the women's wing of the Convention People's Party, unlike its successors, had the ostensible purpose of organizing and mobilizing women to participate in development, but it never fulfilled the function to which it aspired. The affiliates of the Ghana Assembly of Women (formerly the Federation of Ghanaian Women), which are run by educated women, are apolitical and social welfare oriented. None of these groups has as its objective improving the position of woman qua women in Ghanaian society, raising the consciousness of women, or organizing large numbers of women for any purpose.

Profile of Kenyan Women*

Kenya's population encompasses some 70 tribes, 11 of which account for 92% of the African population of the country. Each has its own language and traditions. Although the allocation and use of power, authority and prestige as well as the division of labor by sex differ among the tribes, for the purposes of this paper it is possible to make some generalizations about the traditional position of women and about the transition through which those traditional roles have gone since independence ten years ago. The traditional patterns, tribal customs and laws described below are, in large part, operative today.

Traditionally, men have dominated the essentially patrilineal, polygamous kinship structure that characterizes the major tribal groups (Bantu, Nilotic, Nilo Hamitic). Dominance of the family means control of its economic resources (regardless of who actually works to provide those resources), absolute control of the activities of the women and child members of the family, and complete male freedom in sexual and other pursuits. Female subordination is symbolized in deference rules and etiquette, in legal power, and in the distribution of authority over valued goods (land, cattle, other livestock). Women, nonetheless, have always performed crucial economic functions as cultivators and, in some cases, traders. In the absence of men, they are forceful, articulate and quite obviously the mainstay of the family.

Traditionally, it is generally agreed, women in Kenya have been responsible for a major portion of agricultural labor; tasks have been rather strictly

*Kenyan data on the most salient variables are often nonexistent or of limited validity and reliability. This section has been pieced together from sources of varying quality.

divided between men and women, the heavy labor of clearing as well as hunting, herding and defense assigned to men, the majority of cultivation assigned to women. Women do some petty trading but not, evidently, on the scale of West African women. Women thus make a substantial contribution to the economy but male activities tend to be more prestigeful and to require less routine physical labor.

Customary laws regulating marriage allow polygamy in most tribes, often limit or completely curtail the woman's right to choose a husband, do not allow her to initiate divorce, leave her subject to corporal punishment, and are generally detrimental to her status. Women never become adult under customary law, passing from the legal guardianship of their fathers to the protection of their husbands. In most cases traditional law does not allow women to own property nor to inherit it (see, e.g., Hamilton, 1973; Levine, 1966; Maleche, 1972; Pala, 1974; Whiting, 1973; Wipper, 1971; several of these include reviews of the anthropological literature).

Colonial rule had a profound impact on the life conditions of men and women. There was an immediate and rather drastic alteration in men's roles when they were conscripted for labor on the plantation, in mines and urban services, or military service; they lost their traditional clearing, hunting and defense roles. This meant that many of their former tasks (clearing, etc.) increasingly fell to women. Men, but not women, were given access to modern agricultural training and moved into cash cropping as well as employment in the modern sector. Thus the traditional role definitions were accentuated: men maintained their mobility and control over the more prestigeful, materially rewarding jobs while women faced increasing drudgery and the burden of food production without access to modern technology. Women's burdens fell even

more heavily as more children began going to school (e.g., Levine, 1966; Pala, 1974, reviewing other studies).

These patterns have been maintained since independence despite increases in education and some forms of employment for women. Women run the household, raise the children, do the farming and maintain most of the rural population. Yet it is men who own the land and livestock and receive the pay for the crops their wives and daughters raise. It is widely acknowledged that 90% or more of Kenya's population is rural and depends on subsistence agriculture; 80% of the labor necessary for food production is provided by women. Furthermore, many rural women bear full responsibility for the survival of the family. A large portion of rural households are headed by women due to male migration to the cities for employment. The 1969 Census indicated that 545,000 rural households were headed by women; of these, 400,000 (or 1/3 of all rural households) were ones in which the husband was away in town. The rest were female-headed due to polygamy, widowhood or residence by the male in some other rural area (ILO, 1972:47).

Although there is not the strong strcuture of indigenous markets which characterize West African countries, many Kenyan women are involved in marketing and petty trade (e.g., Boserup, 1970:89), as well as selling their husband's cash crops; they do not usually have control of the proceeds, however. Furthermore, rules governing agricultural cooperatives generally restrict women's access to the fruits of their labor. Women are usually allowed to keep income from other sources, such as handicrafts, but there is not yet a substantial market for such items as baskets. Lack of economic independence is one of the more important grievances of Kenyan women today.

The customary laws alluded to above govern the majority of Kenyans. At a recent seminar in Nairobi on "Trends of Kenya Family Law" (National

Council of Women of Kenya, 1974) attended by women from every province, there was consensus on the need to alter the marriage and inheritance laws. Discussion centered on several themes.

1) A substantial obstacle to changing the legal and actual condition of women is the fact that there are several sets of family law (statutory, Hindu, Moslem, Christian and tribal or customary.) The participants and even, at times, the speakers, were not clear about the provisions of each set of laws nor the particular women which should fall under each set. Furthermore, it is not clear that the proposed new marriage and divorce act and the proposed law of succession would improve the legal status of women all that much since they retain many of the current legal discrepancies.* So far these proposed laws have met absolute opposition in the National Assembly. One of the few laws that afforded women any protection at all ("The Affiliation Act" which says the father of a child must contribute to its support regardless of marital status) was repealed.

2) Until men and women both know about the new laws and until traditional attitudes, values and role definitions begin to change there is not much chance that new laws (or even old ones) will be implemented. Furthermore, especially in the rural areas, there is little access to legal aid (there is one small legal advice center opened in 1973 which serves its immediate community only) even when people do know the law. Local courts and tribunals are dominated by men and by elders. Women are particularly hesitant to approach them.

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*In essence the new law would attempt to codify existing laws presumably to provide structured and legitimate channels through which women can exercise their rights. For example, the draft recommends that a polygamous marriage must have the approval of the first wife, marriages should be registered, divorce should be decided by a court which also would decide property and child custody questions, and corporal chastisement should be forbidden.

3) It was clear from the conference that even many educated elite women are unwilling or unable to challenge male attitudes and dominance. It is also difficult if not impossible for them to consider realistically the needs of the rural masses and, especially, the inability of those masses to exercise legal rights, convince their husbands to write wills which would protect them, and so on.

Members of Parliament, for the most part, apparently have no sympathy with women's needs and are threatened by proposed changes such as the marriage and divorce act of 1968. The constitution (Section 70) appears to guarantee fundamental rights and freedom (life, liberty, expression, etc.) regardless of sex, but, as Hamilton (1973:2) points out, Section 82 concerning protection from discrimination does not mention sex, leaving open the possibility of discriminatory legislation. There are in fact some discriminatory laws (e.g., on wages and hiring, see below) as well as de facto patterns of discrimination which have resulted in disproportionate exclusion of girls from education, training and employment. The government does not acknowledge such discrimination openly. For example, the government report, "Sessional Paper on Employment" (May 1973, No. 10), takes account of the recommendations of an ILO/UNDP Report, Employment, Incomes and Equality--A Strategy for Increasing Productive Employment in Kenya (data collected in Spring 1972), which suggests creation of a special women's bureau within government to monitor and promote better integration of women into the economy. It recommends as well a full scale review of the status of women in order to outline steps which could be taken. The ILO report cites evidence that women have unequal access to education, training and jobs; it indicates that women in rural areas must not only perform essential households tasks, supervise young

young children, carry water and wood, but must also bear almost the entire responsibility for cultivation of the land. It recognizes that women also provide 80% of the nation's self help labor. Nonetheless the government report states:

> The government is not aware of overt discrimination against women in the country. Women are employed in important positions in the Armed Forces, in the police, in the prisons and in the government as well as the private sector. (emphasis mine)

Kenyatta and other national leaders have often publicly called for greater participation by women in national development. This would necessitate considerable effort to equalize women's access to education and to reduce employment discrimination against them.

Table 4 indicates the trend in girls' school enrollment over time. It is clear that substantial progress in absolute numbers and also relative to boys' enrollment has recently been made especially at the lower levels. According to Hamilton (1973:11) government data indicate that there were 16,586 girls in secondary school in 1962; 140,723 in 1971. At the University of Nairobi there were 175 girls in 1964; 2,437 in 1971. The first women were admitted to the University in the mid-1950's and left with certificates in home economics. The first B.A.'s for women were awarded in the late 50's and early 60's. In 1973 the first class of medical students had several women (Whiting, 1973:71). However, it is generally acknowledged (e.g., ILO, 1974:196) that girls start school later and drop out sooner than boys. For example, an ECA paper (1972:19) indicates that between 1960 and 1966 the primary school drop out rate for girls was 37%; for boys it was 8%. The drop out rates at higher levels are high for both boys and girls, but higher for girls. Ministry of Education figures indicate that less than

TABLE 4

Percent of Kenyan Students Who are Girls

At Each Level of Education 1965 - 1970

Level of Education	Year and Percent			
	1965	1967	1969	1970
Primary	37[a]		41[a]	
Secondary	27[a]		28[a]	
Form 1		25[b]	31[b]	30[b]
Form 4			24[b]	
Form 6	20[b]			20[b]
University and Higher		17[a]		

Sources:

[a] ECA, 1974:21

[b] ILO, 1972:296

25,000 girls had completed secondary schools as of 1969. Seventy-five percent of women 25-40 in that year had never been to school and less than 50 percent of girls 10-24 had (ILO, 1974:296). University women represent only 0.5% of all Kenyan women (Whiting, 1973:71).

A. Maleche, a Kenyan sociologist, asserts (1972:28) that girls are socialized to inferior status early in life. Much emphasis is still placed on the traditionally defined roles for women and on marriage. Parents, he says, hesitate to send their girls to school for a number of reasons:

1) education might lead to discontent, immorality and an unwillingness to bear the burden of work;
2) girls are earlier called upon for domestic chores than are boys;
3) boys' education is a better economic investment than is girls' since boys are future heirs but girls are lost to their families when they marry.

Nonetheless, Maleche (1972:20), Hamilton (1973:13) and other observers feel that attitudes toward girls' education are changing if only because mothers want their daughters to have more social and economic security than they themselves had. Furthermore men increasingly want educated wives.

Given the lack of educational facilities and staff especially at post-primary school levels, and given the fact that most Kenyans in the next decade will need to support themselves through self employment and employment outside the wage sector, opportunities for technical and vocational education are particularly important. It is widely acknowledged that these opportunities are much more restricted for girls than for boys; where opportunities exist, girls are generally trained in "domestic science" and handicrafts, not in agricultural technology, marketing practices, accounting, cooperative

management, etc. even though they provide most of the agricultural labor (e.g., Pala, 1974; ILO, 1972; Boserup, 1970:222). An ECA document (The Changing. . . ," 1974:27) notes that,in 1972,400 Kenyan women received cooperative training, through a special series of seminars. Another ECA paper (ECA, 1972) indicates that most of the women have even less access to other types of technical and commercial training.

Disparities between men and women in access to such training as well as the discrepancies in educational achievement (a prerequisite for wage employment) bar most women from jobs (ILO, 1972:296). Table 5 indicates that women as a percentage of employees in the wage sector made no significant gains in the years 1963-1970. As would be expected unemployment (in the modern sector) is more severe for women than for men. This is recognized in the Government Sessional Paper (Republic of Kenya, 1973:3). In urban areas male heads of house have a 5-10% unemployment rate; female heads showed a 10-17% rate. Among urban adult non-heads of household, 10-15% of men are unemployed; 23-27% of women.

Registration of women in employment exchanges indicates they are interested in employment (ILO, 1972:546) even though there are hiring practices which work to discourage such interest. There is salary and promotion discrimination, there are statutory regulations limiting women's work in mining and industry (e.g., prohibiting night work), housing allowances are often limited or much lower than those for men, women in civil service still are often hired on only a temporary basis which means their benefits are severely restricted, and tax laws actually penalize the working wife. Furthermore, women's employment in rural areas is usually classified as "casual labor" and has no benefits and very low wag[illegible] (ILO, 1972:546). The Government Sessional paper, prepared in response to the [illegible] report, did not acknowledge

TABLE 5

Percent of Kenyan Women in Formal Sector Wage Employment

By Economic Sector 1967 - 1970

Sector	Year			
	1963	1966	1969[a]	1970
Agriculture	19	18	15	16
Manufacturing	6	6	5	6
Commerce	10	10	9	10
Transportation	5	5	3	5
Service	16	16	22	20
All[b]	15	14	14	14

[a] - includes public sector

[b] - includes sectors not covered in body of table

Source: ILO, 1972: 297

many of the discriminatory patterns, as indicated above, and its only concrete recommendation on the topic was that income policy should aim at equal pay for equal work irrespective of industry, geographic region, race or sex (p.57).

Not surprisingly, there are few professional women although their numbers are increasing. Available data indicate that they are clustered in traditionally female occupations such as nursing and teaching (e.g., Boserup, 1970:149; Hamilton, 1973; Whiting, 1973). See Table 6 for 1967 data. When professional jobs first became available for African women they were concentrated in these two fields and continue to be. Recently women have been going into secretarial work, social work, other social services and some administrative positions. As various kinds of professional training become available to them one would expect that they would move into medicine (in 1968, 34 women enrolled in the medical school) and law (in 1970, there were 17 women enrolled in the law school) and perhaps other areas (Hamilton, 1973:18). Women with training do not have trouble finding suitable work given the skilled manpower shortage although some of them experience salary and promotion discrimination.

There are very few women in government or other positions of political and economic power, although they do hold high positions in social service organizations. In 1969 the first woman was elected to the national assembly. To date women have been mayors in 2 of the country's largest cities. One is the President's daughter. There have been no woman cabinet members or high ranking civil servants with the exception of a few in posts focussed particularly on women's concerns (Hamilton, 1973:18; Wipper, 1970:437). Efforts to elect women have been unsuccessful even though more women than men vote. As in many countries, including the U.S., many women do not vote for women and vote as their husbands do. Furthermore, standing for election in Kenya requires that a woman give up her job and make a substantial financial commitment. Finally, support from the nation's political party, KANU, has not

TABLE 6

Number of and Percentage of Kenyan Men and Women in Selected Occupations: 1967 Manpower Survey*

OCCUPATION	No. Males	No. Females	% Males	% Females
Architects	234	1	99.5	0.5
Quantity Surveyors	30	1	96.8	3.2
Civil Engineers	415	-	100.0	-
Electrical Engineers	465	-	100.0	-
Mechanical Engineers	375	-	100.0	-
Chemical Engineers	60	-	100.0	-
Other Engineers	34	-	100.0	-
Surveyors	169	-	100.0	-
Physical Scientists and Mathematicians	252	54	82.3	17.7
Veterinarians	73	-	100.0	-
Biologists and Junior Scientists	102	5	95.0	5.0
Agronomists	213	3	98.8	1.2
Doctors	652	110	85.6	14.4
Dentists	52	10	83.4	16.6
Nurses and midwives	731	1,458	33.4	66.6
Administrative Officer (Govt.)	1,250	14	98.9	1.1
Pharmacists	125	20	86.4	13.6
Compounders and Medical Technicians	407	281	59.1	40.9
Optometrists and Professional Medical Workers	389	14	96.6	3.4
University Teachers - Science	101	1	99.0	1.0
University Teachers - Arts	147	7	95.4	4.6

. . . continued/

OCCUPATION	No. Males	No. Females	% Males	% Females
Secondary School Teachers	2,333	1,312	64.0	36.0
Teachers, primary and others	1,034	632	62.4	37.6
Clergy, Librarians and Prof. Tech. Workers N.E.C.	1,305	60	95.6	4.4
Lawyers	355	7	98.1	1.9
Artists, writers and related workers	415	53	88.4	11.6
Directors, administrators and working proprietors	5,402	483	91.8	8.2
All farmers and managers with more than 14 employees	5,482	222	96.1	3.9
Technicians and Draughtsmen	5,519	101	98.2	1.8
Accountant, Economists, and Statisticians	3,717	64	98.3	1.7
Social Workers and Selected Professional and Technical Workers	564	156	78.4	21.6
Sales Workers	8,466	512	94.3	5.7
Clerical Workers	26,263	8,476	75.6	24.4
Skilled Manual Workers	21,261	1,478	93.5	6.5
Skilled Manual Foreman and Supervisors	4,402	35	99.2	0.8
Professional Workers in Transport and Communications	805	11	98.6	1.4
Executive Officers (Govt.)	3,805	213	94.7	5.3
Sub-Total	97,421	15,785		
Grand Total		113,206		

Source: Gethi, 1971:8-9

*These data are for all women, not just Africans, which means the numbers may be somewhat inflated.

been forthcoming. Women's participation in the party is seen largely as an instrument for mobilizing votes for selected male candidates (e.g., Wipper, 1971:431).

Women, as indicated above, are achieving more access to education and employment. Some are beginning to work on their own behalf to circumvent customary practices which constrain their activities (e.g., some women have undertaken to pay off their bride wealth), some have joined farming cooperatives, many have worked in self-help projects to raise money, build schools, and so on. In the last decade or so women's organizations (voluntary associations, cooperatives, etc.) have emerged which call for improvements in women's lives and opportunities. Public outcry has been made against polygamy, bride price, and customs and laws limiting women's right to own land and control the fruits of their labor. Interviews with members of these organizations indicate that there is a core of competent, interested women, but they are usually only the highly educated and professional women. They cannot devote full time to the organizations and their concerns are quite different from the masses of rural, illiterate women. A broader base may be emerging through women's self-help groups throughout the rural areas, but there is no sense of national or even regional cohesion. So far women have been unsuccessful, as indicated above, in eliminating institutional discrimination. Furthermore, even the most pervasive organization, Mandaleo Ya Wanawake, (as well as most of the others) is primarily concerned with improving domestic standards by education in home-making, child care, nutrition, etc. There is some interest in production and sale of hardicrafts to give women some measure of economic independence but little deliberate action for social and institutional change. The probable reason for lack of strong leadership and decisive action among the elite is that the changing status of educated and employed women is "painful

and ambiguous" (Maleche, 1972:28) because ties to traditional role definitions and customs are still strong. Men often have everything to gain (income with no work, unlimited access to women, plenty of leisure time, few responsibilities) from perpetuation of the status quo and a great deal to lose if the system changes. But women also argue for the maintenance of the status quo. Although they would have much to gain from change (e.g., control over the fruits of their labor), they also feel they would have a singificant amount to lose should they work for more equal status and roles. They have been strongly socialized to support the status quo and even those women who have moved into new roles as professionals still depend for status and security on their roles as wives and mothers. The women thus reinforce the men's attitudes which cements the vicious circle: Women have been socialized to believe in the traditional differences between men and women, they acquiesce to their husbands' demands and their frequent refusal to allow women to attend meetings, seek work outside the home and so on. Rural women, more often than not, are so occupied by the daily struggle for survival that they have no time or energy to seek improvements in their economic, social and legal positions.

Similarities and Differences

On first glance there may seem to be some crucial similarities between Kenyan and Ghanaian women which bear repeating. We noted the high fertility levels at the outset. The above profiles indicate that:

1) women are responsible in large part for the family's economic survival;
2) certain aspects of women's labor and procreation are controlled by men;
3) women and men are assigned control over different crops (women - food; men - cash), although this dichotomy is less clear-cut in Ghana;
4) women engage in petty trade of agricultural produce and handicrafts;
5) women depend on their children for help in their work (especially daughters), and security in old age (especially sons);
6) men have been given priority since colonial rule over women in education and employment opportunities;
7) women in both countries represent about the same proportion of all employees in each of the major economic sectors (ECA, "The Data Base. . . ," 1974:19);
8) women's civic participation has been limited; and
9) there is no cohesive women's movement concerned with women qua women.

On closer analysis, important differences emerge. Ghanaian men apparently exercise much less direct control over the daily lives of women, Ghanaian women seem to be less beast of burden than many Kenyan women, men's right to women's earnings is strictly limited. Ghanaian women thus probably have

greater economic independence. There were never the severe status distinctions between men and women in Ghana that there were in Kenya defined by control of land, livestock and cash crops. Both men and women in Ghana have migrated to the urban areas and both have found employment there. The indigenous market system which has always been strong in Ghana has provided more opportunity for Ghanaian women to achieve economic independence and recognition regardless of education. The strongest women's groups are composed of illiterate market women which have successfuly resisted coopting by men. Furthermore Ghanaian women were given access to some education long before Kenyan women were, although current enrollments look very similar. Ironically, it may be that very liberal labor laws for women in Ghana discourage their employment; women in Kenya still face discrimination in labor laws.

Demographic Profile.

Basic data on demographic variables and trends for tropical Africa are quite poor and, until recently, nonexistent. Kenya and Ghana have somewhat more adequate censuses and survey data from the 1960's than do other countries in the region but these data still must be interpreted with caution. Both countries have high rates of population growth brought about by declining mortality in the face of continued high fertility. To the best of our knowledge, Kenya and Ghana have similar birth and death rates, the former hovering around 48, the latter at about 18. This means that both populations are probably growing at at least 3 percent per year. Data are not adequate to document a fertility trend over time but responsible demographers fear there may actually currently be a rise in fertility as traditional fertility control measures are undermined by the modernization process. Furthermore, total fertility and also desired family size remain high in both countries--some of the highest in the world in fact--6.5 - 7.5 children on the average according to available data. About 47 percent of the population in each country are less than 15 years old, posing a terrific dependency burden for the country and especially the women.

Both countries have a population policy and national family planning programs which have attracted very few acceptors as yet. Modern contraceptive methods are not yet widely used even in the urban areas. As of 1970, the most recent data available, perhaps 2% of eligible couples were using any modern means of birth control in either country (Nortman, 1973; Gaisie and Jones, 1970; Likimani and Russey, 1971). Most of those users, to the best of our knowledge, want to stop having children, having already had a large number. There are not yet a significant number of women who are interested in spacing

their children or delaying the first birth. At the same time traditional practices which served to lengthen the interval between births--such as prolonged lactation and ritual abstinence--appear to be decreasing.

As is true in most countries with national family planning programs, the couples most likely to know about and to be using contraceptives are the more urban, the more educated and those with conjugal partners employed in the modern wage sector according to data from the 1960's (Pool, 1970; Caldwell, "The Control of. . .," 1968; Caldwell, "Some Factors Affecting. . .," 1971:752). In Ghana there is some evidence (Caldwell, 1974:10) that knowledge of modern means of contraception is beginning to spread and there may even be an emerging trend toward smaller desired family size among urban elites. Caldwell (1974:15) notes also that probably a majority of women with tertiary education in Ghana have used or are currently using a modern method of contraception. The sex differential in knowledge of methods is significant--men admit to knowing much more about it than do women.

Data on desired family size is always hard to interpret and many respondents often do not respond to questions on the subject. In the 1960's surveys in both countries showed that the majority of rural women desired "big" families or had no interest in the question. More urban women expressed concern with the problem and, of those that did, a majority expressed interest in the idea of "small" families (Pool,1970; Caldwell, "The Control of. . .," 1968). Caldwell also notes that small families were more likely to be favored in rural areas that had experienced much social and economic change than in those that had not. However, it is only in urban areas that more than 3% of respondents desire less than 4 children and only among the elite does the number climb over 10 percent. The same differentials characterize the

distribution of respondents on the variable, "discussions with spouse about family size and family planning." Where comparable data are available, husbands appear to want significantly more children than do their wives.

Available data for Kenya (Ross et al., 1972:14) are more limited tha those for Ghana. They indicate that younger and illiterate women do accept contraceptives but that educated women are more likely to. The average number of living children of acceptors is probably 4.8. As in Ghana, expressed interest in family planning appears to be fairly widespread but knowledge and practice of particular methods is restricted (Pool, 1970; Dow, 1969; Heisel, 1968; Heisel, 1971:782). Surveys in both countries indicate that almost all respondents are able to designate at least one serious disadvantage of having many children; some in fact give no advantages and volunteer their opinion on disadvantages (Caldwell, "The Control of. . . ," 1968; Dow, 1969) The most frequent disadvantage cited is the economic burden of children and this is most often defined in terms of education costs.

In the absence of strong, highly focussed studies, we can only speculate about the reasons for continued high fertility and low acceptance of contraception within or outside the national family planning programs. The programs are middle-aged, as family planning programs go: Ghana's is about 5 years old, Kenya's 8. But they have not been administered optimally. If KAP data are accurate in their estimates of women who want no more children, (e.g., Kenya, about 30% of respondents from the major tribes want no more children, one third of women 30-34 and one fifth of those 25-29 felt they already had enough, Heisel, 1968), there is little doubt that the national family planning programs could reach more women if they were better run. Recent surveys (ILO, 1972: 125-126; Pool, 1971) indicate that the number of desired children may be

decreasing especially among younger women. There seems to be agreement that family planning would be in greater demand ". . .if anxieties were allayed and more facilities made available." However, on the basis of the experience of other programs and the magnitude of the population growth facing these countries, there is also little reason to assume that even an optimally run program could achieve the fertility reduction sought in the population policies of the two countries without specific measures that would increase couples' motivation to practice family planning.

Another explanation given for the low incidence of contraceptive practice is infant mortality. It is still very high in both countries (Ghana, 156 per 1000; Kenya, 132), a phenomenon generally thought to encourage high pregnancy rates (See, e.g., Heisel, 1971:786). There are various authors who have argued that cultural norms and practices which demand many children such as burial rituals and lineage perpetuation are important in encouraging high fertility. Others (e.g., Pool, 1970; Gaisie, 1972:88) assert, on the basis of tribal studies, that the key factors are not cultural but socioeconomic. One of the leading demographers of tropical Africa, Caldwell (1974) asserts that changes in socioeconomic conditions or education are not the key factors in fertility reduction. Rather, an increase in the use of modern contraceptives is due, he argues, to the "spread of new ideas" to people. His evidence indicates that increased contraceptive usage can and does occur among people whose residence, education and other life conditions have not changed. He points out that often there is no absolute relation between socioeconomic level and a small family and argues that information and service programs which understand the value of children in the social context can achieve a great deal (see also, Heisel, 1968).

The model examined here recognizes the importance of both cultural and socioeconomic factors and seeks to explain the complex patterns which have yielded the various opinions outlined above. Basically the theory is that as long as women are defined largely or solely as wives and mothers, as long as their social and economic status and security depend on the number of children they have, they will have good reason to continue having many children.

Data limitations in developing countries generally restrict testing of this model to two indicators of women's status: education and employment. The mechanisms for each are complex and not well known even for developed countries. It is hypothesized that women's education is correlated with lower fertility because:

a) it allows development of non-domestic interests and skills which facilitate economic independence and provide alternative satisfactions to children;

b) the length of schooling and the employment which it facilitates help promote a delay in marriage and/or the first birth and, possibly smaller desired family size;

c) education is generally correlated with increased desire for and effective practice of contraception;

d) it is associated often with changes in marital relationships leading to a more companionate dyad (Caldwell, "Population Change. . . ," 1968).

It is hypothesized that women's employment may be correlated with lower fertility because:

a) it provides interests and satisfaction in addition to or in place of motherhood reducing the number of children required for status and security, and increasing the opportunity costs of children;

b) if employment offers sufficiently desirable status and material reward, it may displace some of the existing pronatalist attitudes and social pressures toward high fertility;

c) employment which provides some measure of economic independence can encourage a delay in the age at marriage and also a more egalitarian marital relationship.

Data from developed countries indicate that higher educational levels for women and increased opportunities for satisfying work outside the home are associated with lower fertility. The relationships are less clear for developing countries since data are less adequate and since many fewer studies have been done. A review of research from the past decade or so (Germain, 1974) indicates that in most developing countries where research has been done there is a reasonably strong negative association between women's education and various fertility measures. The data cited above on Kenya and Ghana substantiate this position. But the relationship is not always an inverse one (Caldwell, "Some Factors Affecting. . . ," 1971; Heisel, 1971). Cultural pressures toward high fertility in rural areas in some countries may be strong enough to obliterate the effect on reproductive behavior of even six or eight years of schooling, although Caldwell ("Some Factors Affecting. . . ," 1971) has suggested that, where illiteracy is particularly high in African countries, the small move from illiteracy to literacy can make a difference in fertility behavior. The age of the respondents and rural/urban residence, among other factors, are important in this regard. The effect of education on fertility is likely to depend on the type and level of education, whether it leads to activities other than or in addition to childbearing and the level of education in the country to begin with. Education is also often associated

with later age at marriage, and, in fact, there are studies from Africa which indicate that the difference in average age at first marriage between less and more educated women may account for most of the educational differentials in completed family size (Caldwell, 1967; Caldwell, "Some Factors Affecting. . . ," 1971; see Germain, 1974 for international data). Studies in Tropical Africa indicate that education of the woman is positively related to contraceptive knowledge and practice although the relationship may be confounded by socio-economic status (Caldwell, "Antinatal Practice in Tropical Africa," 1971; Caldwell, "The Control of. . . ," 1968; Pool, 1970; Heisel, 1968), and many acceptors in family planning programs are illiterate or have low levels of education. The fertility impact of the wife's education may be limited by the husband's education or occupation but data from the African studies are not sufficient to tell.

The relationship between women's employment and fertility in developing countries is even more complex and inconsistent both within and across nations. Several authors have reviewed research done to date in developing countries and come to opposite or conflicting opinions about the existence of a relationship, its direction if it exists, the reasons for it, its relative explanatory power, and the utility of efforts to expand women's nondomestic roles as a means of encouraging reduced fertility. (See Germain 1974). Studies have not been done on this relationship in Ghana and Kenya to our knowledge. This is particularly unfortunate since, as indicated above, women in both Kenya and Ghana have traditionally had rather broad economic roles in society. Despite these economic roles, fertility, as noted, has remained high.

There are undoubtedly many forces which act to perpetuate their high fertility. Caldwell's ("The Control of . . . ," 1968) review of 9 West African and 3 Kenyan KAP surveys of varying quality all done in the 1960's concludes that children serve three main functions:

a) they are economically valuable as a source of labor though there is some evidence of a decline in the labor value of children in the urban areas and where modernization is beginning in the agricultural sector;

b) they are the main source of social and economic security in old age and, to a lesser extent, in sickness;

c) the number of children adds to parental prestige.

These functions, it is theorized, are particularly crucial to the mother because:

a) children care for younger children, help in the mother's agricultural chores, etc.

b) where women have severely limited inheritance rights, can be divorced at will and cannot remarry easily, where women do not own land, depend on their own labor rather than the husband's for basic subsistence, and are unable to save money they do earn, children are the only source of security available to them;

c) most often, as indicated above, motherhood is a key element in a Kenyan or Ghanaian woman's self-definition; barrenness is often

ridiculed and high fertility substantially rewarded as an indication of attainment of adult status and a means of recognizing marriage.

Under such circumstances, high fertility is clearly functional from the point of view of the woman. Currently, for women in Kenya and Ghana, work does not conflict with motherhood; they do not have to choose between the two. Where, as in the case of Ghana and Kenya, women work in or near the home or can make arrangements for child care through the family, where cultural norms dictate that women should be mothers of large families even if they do work, and where the type of work available offers few or no rewards that would compensate for having fewer children, fertility is not likely to decrease. This theory would explain the lack of consistent negative correlation between female labor force participation and fertility in many developing countries (see Germain, 1974). Recent studies go beyond this theory and argue that the employment-fertility relationship depends not on employment itself but on a constellation of factors associated with modernization especially the wife's motivation for working, her approval of nondomestic roles for women, the division of labor and decision-making in the family, the amount and type of education she has received (see, e.g., Pool, 1970).

In the Kenya and Ghana contexts it is clear that the type of economic activities undertaken by most women in these countries allow them both to work and to have large families; and, as indicated above, some of their pursuits depend on help from children. It is also apparent from data presented earlier that the work in which the majority of women engage in the two countries is relatively low status (agricultural subsistence, petty trade). It is noteworthy that those women who work in more prestigeful jobs and have a university

education are also the ones who have lower fertility. For these women, it is hypothesized, the rewards of education and employment outweigh the social risks involved in pursuing a modern occupation.

It is also postulated that there has not yet been enough time for modern education and activity to have an effect on fertility behavior. The expansion in the educational facilities in most African countries has come rather recently. Most of the women of childbearing age still have had less than primary school education. It may take a generation or more even for more highly educated women to comprehend the implications of reduced child mortality and to obtain alternative satisfactions to childbearing. In the interim they may well continue to have the large families that are prescribed by social tradition and economic necessity. Stillman (1974) nonetheless argues that, given the evidence we do have on urban educated elite women, it is reasonable to expect that as the benefits of modernization are extended to the masses fertility may well decline. But there is not much hope that secondary and higher education as well as rewarding employment will soon be available to the masses of women in Ghana or Kenya. Furthermore the population programs of the two countries focus on the provision of contraceptive information and services, reaching women only in their roles as reproductive agents. As noted at the outset such programs are necessary though insufficient. A broader policy would also take into account the data we do have which indicate the importance of women's education and employment; would seek more substantial information on roles played by, e.g., kinship structure, traditional child-spacing practices, the nature of women's traditional work, the value of children, urbanization, liberal labor laws, in fertility behavior; and would seek to insure that women participate fully in the development process. Reducing women's dependence on children by increasing the productivity of the labor they currently do and increasing their education may be critical first steps

even though the fertility impact is not likely to be immediately visible or measurable.

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